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For Immediate Release

Court of Justice officials from Jefferson County given 2006 Law Day awards

FRANKFORT, Ky., June 2, 2006 — Three Court of Justice officials from Jefferson County received a 2006 Law Related Education Award of Achievement at the annual Law Day ceremony which took place May 1 at the state Capitol in Frankfort.

The annual Law Day ceremony celebrates the legal profession throughout the Commonwealth. "Since 1990, the Kentucky Court of Justice has presented the prestigious Law Related Education Award of Achievement to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to educating youth and professionals about the fundamental principles of the Kentucky Constitution," said Patrick Yewell, general manager of the Department of Juvenile Services of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Truancy Court

Judge Joan L. Byer, who serves the Family Division of Jefferson Circuit Court, was honored for her work with Truancy Court. Judge Byer is widely recognized for developing and implementing one of the first and most successful Truancy Court diversion models in the United States. Her concept has been replicated successfully in many communities throughout the country. In 2001, her program received the annual Innovation in Literacy Services Award from the American Bar Association Literacy and the Courts Project. She is a frequent speaker and trainer at national and local conferences that focus on school attendance and truancy. Judge Byer is president of the National Truancy Prevention Association (NTPA). She previously served as NTPA's first vice president and is a founding member of the association, which was created in 2002. She began serving as a Family Court judge in Jefferson County in 1996.

We the People ... Project Citizen

Court designated workers Laura Crisp and Valorie Stamper were recognized for their work with the We the People... Project Citizen. We the People ... Project Citizen is a civic education program for middle schools that promotes responsible involvement in state and local governments and encourages civic participation among students, their parents and members of the community. Students learn how to monitor and influence public policy by working on a class project to identify and study a public policy issue and then develop an action plan to implement their policy. The final product is a portfolio displaying each group's work.

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The Administrative Office of the Courts is the operational arm of the Kentucky Court of Justice and supports the activities of more than 3,500 court system employees, including the elected offices of justices, judges and circuit court clerks. In 1990, the AOC formed the Division of Law Related Education under the Department of Juvenile Services to educate students, educators and law enforcement professionals about the law, the legal process and the fundamental principles of our constitutional democracy.

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